



BUSINESS PRIORITIES

2024 Legislative Agenda

The Voice of East Valley Business

Representing more than 5,000 member firms with a collected voice at the State and Federal levels since 1999

www.evcca.org

2024 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

The following legislative priorities outline various issues that directly impact the ability of East Valley companies to grow their businesses. These statements hold true at many levels of government. Each Chamber individually advocates at their municipal level, and this document is not designed to supersede the local chamber's ability to do so.

This document is a shared outline of essential matters that impact East Valley businesses on issues including:

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WHO WE ARE

Established in 1999, the East Valley Chambers of Commerce Alliance (the Alliance) advocates as a united voice at the State and Federal levels and is represented by Dorn Policy Group, Inc. The EVCCA unifies more than 5,000 member firms across the region.

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ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Federal	State	Local
	✓	✓
	✓	
	✓	✓
	✓	✓
✓		
✓	✓	✓
✓		
	✓	✓

The Alliance Supports

- Economic development incentives and continued funding to improve Arizona's competitive position for business attraction, retention and expansion, and tourism marketing.
- The continuation of the Arizona Commerce Authority.
- Job creation measures and fiscally responsible tax incentives to support workforce training, retraining, and upskilling.
- Development of a qualified workforce, including support for certifications, credentials, micro-credentials, and degree opportunities.
- Programs and agreements that include fair trade opportunities for U.S. businesses and ease their ability to compete globally, including the EX-IM Bank.
- Advanced manufacturing, including electric vehicles, batteries, semiconductors, medical devices, and clean fuels.
- The presence and growth of the defense and aerospace industry, including a fiscally responsible defense budget that protects national security while eliminating automatic sequestration budget reductions.
- Policies that encourage attainable workforce housing while respecting local control and private property rights.



EDUCATION (P-12)

Federal	State	Local
✓	✓	✓
	✓	
	✓	✓
	✓	✓
	✓	✓
	✓	✓
	✓	✓
	✓	

The Alliance Supports

- An innovative and competitive P-12 education marketplace that includes traditional district schools, public charter schools, private schools, technical training institutions, and online learning with simplified, stable, equitable funding.
- Continued measurement of our state's education outcomes from early childhood through college and career.
- Stable, consistent, and appropriate education funding that enhances economic development, CTE programs, graduation rates, and school safety.
- Full fiscal transparency in the public school project bidding process, including construction expenditures.
- Developing a revised, comprehensive K-12 funding formula that will address critical issues including, but not limited to the following: teacher shortages; school construction; facility maintenance; incentive pay for teachers; student testing outcomes; graduate rates; dropout rates; reading levels; workforce readiness; modernized student tracking systems of attendance counts; Career and Technical Education (CTED).
- An innovative, world-class school system that uses rigorous education standards and assessments emphasizing STEAM, history, civics, and business education so that Arizona graduates can be college and career-ready, financially literate, and prepared to compete aggressively in the global marketplace.
- New approaches to funding Arizona's public education system that provide adequate resources by thoroughly evaluating State Trust Lands maximization, equity of cross-delivery models pursuant to financial reporting, student transportation, special needs students' requirements, and reconsideration of districts' access to property taxes.
- An effective long-term solution to the P-12 aggregate expenditure limit that eliminates the annual need to adjust the cap, allows for local budgeting, and respects the will of the voters.

EDUCATION (POST-SECONDARY)

Federal	State	Local
	✓	
✓	✓	
	✓	
	✓	

The Alliance Supports

- Strengthening public universities and community colleges with a stable funding model based on the state funding half of the cost to educate resident students, supporting critical capital projects, and enhanced flexibility to ensure access for qualified students, world-class research capabilities, and excellent workforce preparation.
- Strategic investments in Arizona State University and the “New Economy Initiative” to enhance the Arizona economy and comparable investments in community colleges and other public universities.
- Equitable funding of Arizona’s state universities and community colleges.
- Continued emphasis on the importance of job training and workforce development to support the needs of Arizona employers and small businesses.



ENERGY, ENVIRONMENT, AND LAND MANAGEMENT

The Alliance Supports

Federal	State	Local
	✓	✓
	✓	✓
✓	✓	✓
✓	✓	✓
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	✓	
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	✓	
✓	✓	✓
✓	✓	✓

- State energy policies that encourage the development and maintenance of statewide energy infrastructure, such as generation, transmission, and distribution facilities, to ensure safe, affordable, and reliable energy supplies.
- Policies that recognize the complexity of energy resource planning decisions by Arizona utilities and maintain utilities' ability to control costs.
- A balanced approach to development, recreational use, and preservation of State Trust Land.
- Appropriate zoning and land use around military installations and airports that advance the mission of those facilities.
- Ongoing negotiations regarding future Colorado River operating rules (Reconsultation) and the pursuit of larger contributions from other Colorado River Basin States to conserve additional Colorado River water.
- Distribution of federally appropriated funds to projects that provide durable, long-term water savings on the Colorado River.
- Modifications to Bartlett Dam to ensure an adequate water supply for our future needs.
- Water Infrastructure Finance Authority (WIFA) to ensure a transparent process is in place for the investment of state and federal funds in projects aimed at augmentation, conservation, and reuse of water supplies.
- Reasonable air, water quality, and energy efficiency policies that provide practical, multiple options for businesses and that do not exceed federal requirements.
- Appropriate legislation, regulation, and policies that recognize the value of the electric power grid as an asset that requires consistent maintenance, improvement, and support through investments by all of those who use and operate the grid.

ENERGY, ENVIRONMENT, AND LAND MANAGEMENT

Federal	State	Local
✓	✓	
✓	✓	
	✓	
✓	✓	✓
✓	✓	✓
✓	✓	

The Alliance Supports

- Facilitating the active management and thinning of Arizona's federal and state forest lands to improve and protect watershed health through support for continued collaboration efforts with state and federal agencies such as the Four Forest Restoration Initiative, public-private partnerships, investment in forest restoration projects, economic development programs to support the attraction, retention, and expansion of forest products industry.
- Maintaining Arizona's primacy and role under the Clean Air Act as the state works with the EPA to meet federal regulations.
- Policies that distribute system costs equitably by creating mechanisms that recover grid costs from distributed generation customers, enhance cost transparency, and minimize cost shifting between consumer classes to ensure all customers pay a fair and equitable share of costs to maintain the grid and to keep it operating reliably.
- Appropriate action to ensure an adequate supply, necessary infrastructure, and transmission of gasoline, broadband, electricity, natural gas, water, and other critical resources to fuel our state's economic vitality.
- The protection of Arizona's critical energy infrastructure, including but not limited to the generation, transmission, and distribution assets already operating.
- Cost-effective clean energy initiatives and policies that bolster economic growth through the advancement and development of new and existing technologies.



ENERGY, ENVIRONMENT, AND LAND MANAGEMENT

Federal

State

Local

	✓	
✓	✓	✓
✓	✓	
	✓	
✓	✓	✓
	✓	
	✓	✓
✓	✓	✓

The Alliance Supports

- Programs and rates that encourage customers to manage their peak power usage to help control overall system costs and maintain affordable power in Arizona.
- The 1980 Arizona Groundwater Management Act, including the 100-year assured water supply requirement for development. Arizona's water needs are vastly different from those of the northeast U.S. and are best left to State management. The Alliance also supports statewide development of long-term sustainable water supplies, coordination between active management areas, encouraging direct groundwater recharge projects, and promoting water conservation on a state level.
- Appropriate incentives for clean fuels, but not at the expense of current energy supplies and producers.
- A balanced energy portfolio and battery-energy storage solutions and technologies that support the resiliency and reliability of the power grid.
- Policies and processes for research and development of alternative water source options (desalinization, wastewater treatment, excess transfers, etc.).
- The use of securitization, a financial tool used to refinance utility assets, when appropriate, to save residential and business customers money.

The Alliance Opposes

- Policies that prevent consumers and businesses from accessing natural gas for their home comfort and business needs.
- Mandates to achieve "green" initiatives.

GOVERNMENT PROCESSES AND ELECTION REFORM

Federal	State	Local
	✓	✓
✓		
	✓	
✓	✓	
✓	✓	✓
✓	✓	✓
✓	✓	✓
	✓	✓

The Alliance Supports

- Special district and local government transparency data and metrics to ensure private sector services are properly considered.
- Federal agencies operating within their boundaries as directed by Congress. All rules and regulations should be thoroughly vetted as to their economic implications under the Administrative Procedures Act.
- Modernization of the Department of Revenue, allowing the agency to provide appropriate data and service delivery to taxpayers and customers.
- Incremental reduction of state and federal debt obligations.
- Effective communication between government departments and service delivery modernization to businesses, including cost-effective computer system upgrades.
- The abolition of publicly funded elections at the state and local level.
- Legislation that provides information and security designed to shield businesses from cyber threats while protecting their rights to privacy.
- Privatizing services if they can be comparably and appropriately delivered at equal or less cost.



GOVERNMENT PROCESSES AND ELECTION REFORM

Federal	State	Local
	✓	✓
✓		
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✓	✓	✓
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	✓	✓

The Alliance Supports

- Policies and appropriations accomplished by elected legislators; not through unnecessary ballot measures, executive orders, or multi-state coalitions.
- Reforms of over-reaching and burdensome OSHA (Occupational Safety and Hazard Act) and NLRB (National Labor Relations Board) regulations.
- A uniform state system of lobbying registration and reporting rather than multiple local systems.
- Reform to the Proposition 105 system that allows 2/3 of the legislature to change a ballot measure rather than 3/4 without the need to further the purpose.
- Permitting legislative changes to initiatives with voter ratification.
- Referral of voter-approved initiatives and referendums every ten years.
- Referral of a supermajority threshold for voter protection of measures passed at the ballot.
- Raising accountability and transparency requirements for ballot initiative campaign management and signature collectors and increasing the number of signatures required.
- A referendum suspending automatic spending increases for voter-protected funds in a fiscal year when revenues do not meet projections.

The Alliance Opposes

- Rollovers and sweeps of dedicated funds as a mechanism for balancing the budget.
- Regulatory fee increases that are used as revenue generation and are not reflective of administrative cost recovery.
- Efforts to increase localized wage and benefit laws and requirements that are more stringent than state and federal mandates.

Federal	State	Local
✓	✓	✓
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The Alliance Supports

- An environment that promotes investment in the healthcare industry, addresses provider shortages, builds a high-quality health professions pipeline, and improves patient outcomes.
- Access to competitive healthcare programs that fix the current problem of rising healthcare costs, loss of providers, and loss of benefits within plans.
- Encouraging innovative measures, such as purchasing plans across state lines, plan portable incentives, use of electronic information, and telemedicine technologies to ensure access and coverage and lower health insurance costs for businesses.
- Patient-centered clarity in the medical billing process that treats all consumers equally.
- Appropriate legislation to strengthen our behavioral health system.

The Alliance Opposes

- Health insurance coverage mandates that negatively impact a business's ability to operate.



IMMIGRATION

Federal	✓	✓
State		
Local		

The Alliance Supports

- Congressional legislation and other actions to properly seal our porous borders, expeditiously respond to the labor needs of the economy, and resolve the issues of illegal immigrants already living in the U.S.
- We support comprehensive immigration policy reform that:
 - Strengthens border security by guarding the physical border and better tracking of expired visas.
 - Offers a secure, reliable system for employers to verify the legal work eligibility of employees that is a federally based, user-friendly, low-cost, non-discriminatory method to ensure they comply in good faith with the law.
 - Establishes a market-based immigration process to support workforce needs and respond quickly to U.S. businesses' employment demands.
 - Develops criteria and establishes a guest worker/visa program for illegal immigrants already in the U.S. with no other criminal or arrest record in both the U.S. and their countries of origin, which is based on strictly enforced criteria, including payment of penalties.
 - Reimburses states for the costs of incarcerating, educating, and providing health care for individuals who are in the country illegally.

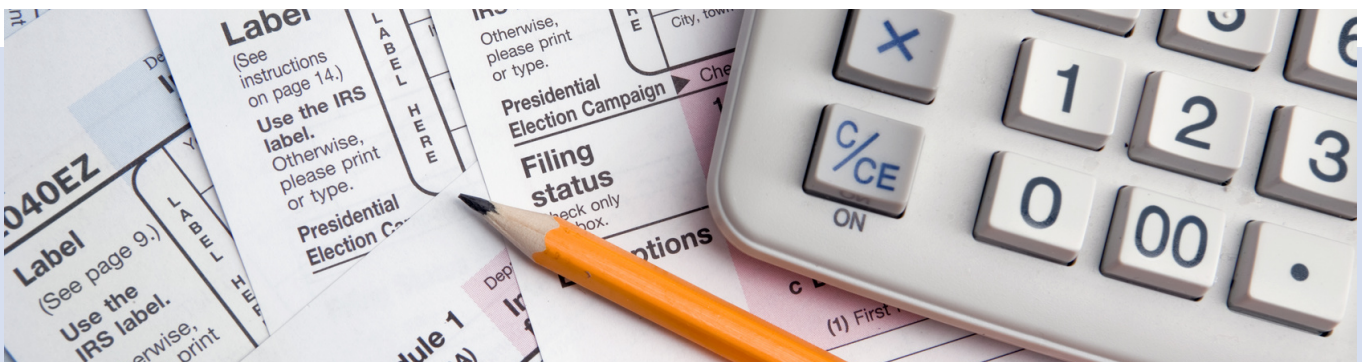
Federal	State	Local
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The Alliance Supports

- Expediting consideration of the annual conformity legislation to allow businesses to prepare tax returns.
- Clear and concise tax laws that allow businesses to understand their liability without subjective agency interpretation.
- Raising the business personal property tax exemption threshold as an economic stimulus mechanism for small businesses.
- Research and development tax credits to encourage industry innovation and ensure a globally competitive position.
- The abolishment of tax-supported funds not used for the intended purpose.
- Responsible, well-balanced tax reforms that promote the long-term fiscal strength of the state and place Arizona in a competitive position, including financing mechanisms to improve Arizona's competitive position for business attraction, retention, and expansion.

The Alliance Opposes

- Passage of measures that limit flexibility in funding decisions that adversely impact the business community.
- Business tax increases including the elimination of current business tax credits or business tax exemptions.
- Changes in the formula to reduce the percentage of state-shared revenues payable to cities and towns or repayment requirements back to the State.



TRANSPORTATION

Federal	State	Local
	✓	✓
✓	✓	✓
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✓	✓	✓

The Alliance Supports

- Use of innovative transportation solutions such as public-private partnerships that improve the movement of people and goods, foster job creation, and enhance economic development.
- Connecting employees and goods to job centers through a private and public multimodal transportation system with international, statewide, and multiregional transportation options, with predictable, appropriate funding sources.
- Continued funding of regional roadways with priority given to the widening of I-10, completion of SR 24, Loop 101, Loop 202, and the Southeast Valley North/South corridor.
- More state and federal transportation dollars appropriated to the Phoenix-Mesa-Scottsdale metropolitan statistical area and northeast Pinal County based on revenue generated, vehicle miles traveled, population increase, and economic development opportunities.
- The regional airport system and Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport as an economic catalyst.

WORKPLACE POLICIES AND TORT REFORM

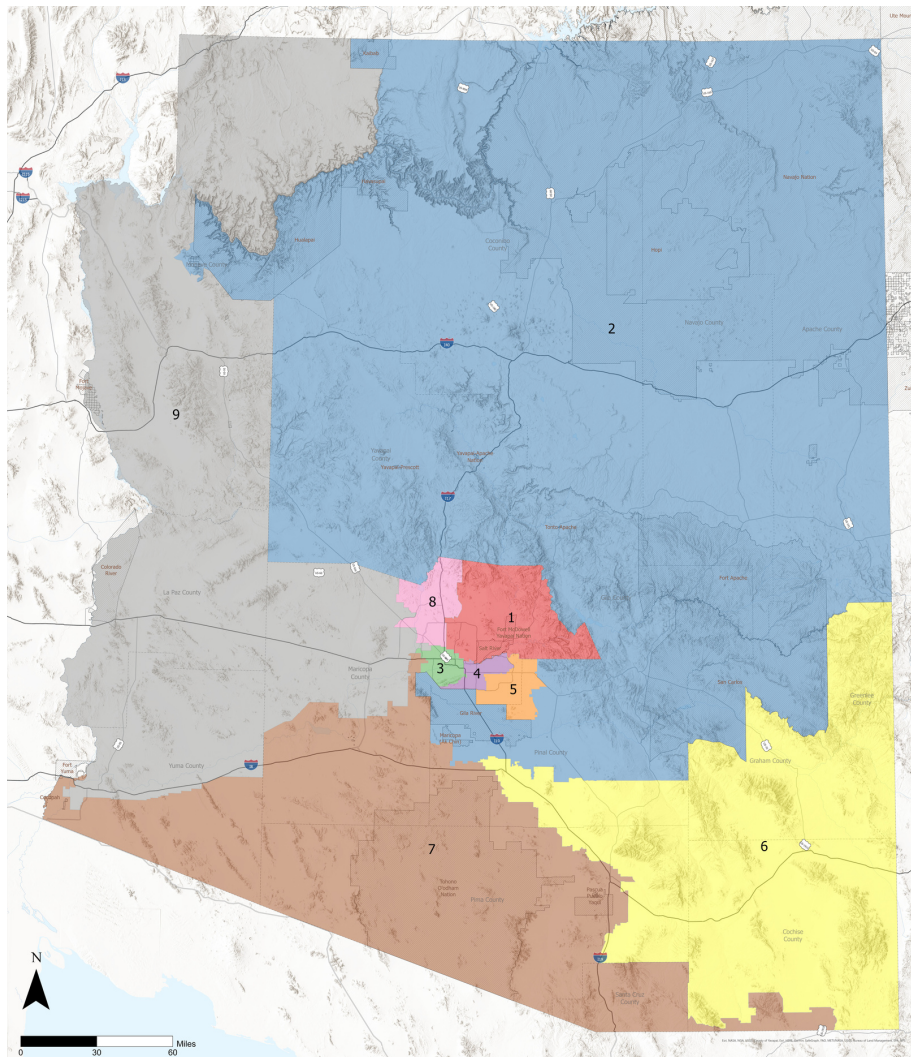
Federal	State	Local
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The Alliance Supports

- Arizona's status as a "right-to-work" and "employment-at-will" state.
- Preserving a business's ability to implement and enforce its workplace policies and workforce pay/benefits without unnecessary government intrusion or regulation.
- Preserving a business owner's ability to manage its workplace and workforce without expanded federal intrusion.
- Appropriate reforms that attempt to decrease workers' compensation and unemployment insurance costs.
- Laws that protect businesses from nuisance or other unnecessary lawsuits that impact the ability of a business to operate without unnecessary legal expenses, including continued business protections from lawsuits specifically related to public health crises.
- Reforms that ease or relieve the burden on business from Proposition 105 (2018).
- Policies that foster, but do not mandate, mentoring and apprenticeship opportunities.

The Alliance Opposes

- Changes to workers' compensation benefits that increase costs to employers.
- Excessive government intrusion on the workforce, including changes in qualifications for exempt employees, creating a joint employer for purposes of collective bargaining, and easing the way for "Ambush Elections."
- Mandating apprenticeship programs in contracts or development agreements.
- The Protecting the Right to Organize (PRO) Act, subsequent legislation, and its detrimental provisions.
- Any change to Arizona's "right-to-work" and "employment-at-will" state.



APACHE JUNCTION AREA CHAMBER

Congressional District 5
Legislative Districts 7, 10

CAREFREE CAVE CREEK CHAMBER

Congressional District 1
Legislative District 3

CHANDLER CHAMBER

Congressional District 4, 5
Legislative Districts 12, 13, 14

GILBERT CHAMBER

Congressional District 5
Legislative Districts 13, 14

MESA CHAMBER

Congressional Districts 4, 5
Legislative Districts 8, 9, 10, 15

QUEEN CREEK CHAMBER

Congressional District 5
Legislative Districts 14, 15

SCOTTSDALE CHAMBER

Congressional District 1
Legislative Districts 3, 4, 8

TEMPE CHAMBER

Congressional District 4
Legislative Districts 8, 12

